

PROPOSALS

FOR PRINTING BY SUBSCRIPTION A NEW WORK,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF A PUBLIC INSTITUTION,

ENTITLED,

Bibliotheca Universalis Americana;

OR, AN

UNIVERSAL AMERICAN LIBRARY:

CONTAINING

A GENERAL CATALOGUE OF PUBLICATIONS,

RELATING TO AMERICA AND THE WEST INDIES,

**FROM THE FIRST DISCOVERY THEREOF BY COLUMBUS IN 1492, TO THE END OF THE
PRESENT CENTURY.**

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And Fellow of ST. MARY MAGDALEN COLLEGE, OXFORD.

Prospectus of this Publication.

THIS Work is intended to comprise not only all Books and Pamphlets relating to America and the West Indies, particularly those in our own language, which were written during the late war; but all others of any note and celebrity, which have been written by American Authors, or have proceeded originally from the American Press, upon what subjects soever they may treat.

Many smaller productions also in loose sheets, which have been thought worthy of preservation in public Libraries, as well as several articles in the Philosophical and other Transactions of literary societies, which have not otherwise appeared in print, will occasionally be inserted in this Collection.

The best Maps, Charts, &c. will likewise generally be added, together with all the Voyages and Discoveries in the North and South Seas throughout the whole of the Western Hemisphere.

Included moreover in the same plan, as collaterally connected with it, are all Pamphlets relating to the Slave Trade, the general Accounts of Missionaries, and many acts and publications of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

In books, which contain large Collections and Compilations from different Authors, especially those of early date, such as Hakluyt, Purchas, Churchill, Grynetus, De Bry, &c. the separate articles will frequently be specified, with reference to the passages where they may be found.

With respect to Manuscripts relating to America, it would be a vain and endless task to attempt to give any regular and systematical description of them. Most of these, it is well known, of earliest date, and consequently the most valuable and curious, are deposited in Libraries among the Archives of the Spanish Monarchy, or in the scattered Convents of that country, where they have hitherto been kept concealed with peculiar solicitude, as Dr. Robertson observes, from the public eye. Those however which are preserved in our own public Libraries, of which Catalogues have been formed or notice taken by the most eminent Historians, will be pointed out in general terms, if not specifically mentioned, in the course of this Publication.

In the general division of this Work it is intended to arrange each article under separate classes, according to the different subjects upon which it treats, as hereafter shall appear most convenient and suitable to the undertaking.

The divisions, which at present appear most eligible to the Editor, are—

1. The general History and Description of the Countries included in this Plan, containing the general Accounts of Voyages, Travels, Adventures, Journals, Campaigns, Sieges, Battles, &c.
2. Geographical Books and Gazetteers, Atlases, Maps, Charts, &c.
3. Books upon Divinity and Moral Subjects; particularly the Disputes and Persecutions of the Quakers in Pennsylvania and New England, the History of the United Brethren in America, and all other religious Sects.
4. Law Books, State Papers, Trials, and Political Pamphlets.
5. Books relating to Natural History, Medicine, Chirurgery, &c.
6. Ditto to the Arts and Sciences, Antiquities and Literature in general.
7. Ditto to Trade in general and Plantation, Agriculture, and the American Fisheries.
8. Ditto to the Affairs of the South Sea Company in particular.
9. Ditto of the Scots Colony at Darien.
10. Ditto of the Hudson's Bay Company.
11. Ditto of the celebrated Mississippi Scheme.
12. Ditto of the Slave Trade and African Company trading to the West Indies.
13. Books of Poetry, Music, Novels, and Dramatic Compositions.
14. Addenda, or Appendix of Miscellaneous Articles not included under any of the above heads, or accidentally before omitted.

Lastly. All books in the Indian languages, to what class soever they may properly belong, will be thrown together into a separate Appendix by themselves, as more particularly appropriate to this Publication.

But after all it is impossible perhaps for any one to form a sufficiently accurate judgment what would be the best arrangement of these articles, till he had all the materials properly prepared and laid before him. These observations however, it is presumed, are sufficient to give as full an idea of the general plan and design of this undertaking, as its present state and progress will admit of.

The whole will be published in *Chronological Order*, as far as the dates can be ascertained; to which will be added a very copious *Alphabetical Index* both of the names of the Authors, and the principal matters treated upon in their publications.

Books, to which no dates can properly be assigned, will be arranged, according to the different languages in which they are written, in alphabetical order at the end of each class, the preference being given in the first instance to those in our own language.

The Title Pages in general, especially of the most valuable and scarce books, will be given verbatim at full length from the original Authors, wherever access could be had to their works; in other cases they will be copied from Reviews, Catalogues, Advertisements, &c. with the different editions, dates, sizes, and original prices annexed, whenever they can be determined.

For the better information and assistance of students, who may wish to consult them, the principal public and private Libraries, from which they have been borrowed, will likewise be added, with many notes and observations accompanying them, from literary Journals and the most approved Authors.

The Sources from which the various Materials for this Work have been collected, are—

- I. From those Authors, who have treated before upon the same subject, viz. (1.) From White Kennett, Bishop of Peterborough, in his book, entitled, "*Bibliotheca Americana Primordia* ; or, *An Attempt towards laying the Foundation of an American Library*," published in the year 1713, in one vol. 4to. the plan and design of which will chiefly be followed in this publication. (2.) From Don Antonio de Leon Pinelo, in a work entitled, "*Epitome de la Bibliotheca Oriental y Occidental*, &c." published in 1738, in 3 vols. folio. (3.) From an anonymous publication, entitled, "*Bibliotheca Americana*, &c." in one vol. 4to. bearing date 1789.
 - II. From the Catalogues of the principal public Libraries in Europe, particularly of the British Museum and Bodleian Libraries, every book of which relating to the above subject, as far as could be ascertained and found from the most diligent investigation, has been already inspected with great care and attention preparatory to these Proposals.
 - III. From several circulating and private Libraries of gentlemen, who have made large collections of books and pamphlets upon American subjects.
 - IV. From Reviews and Literary Journals, viz. The Analytical, Critical, English, London, Medical, and Monthly Reviews, together with the British Critic and the earlier productions of Roche's Memoirs, Clavel's Catalogue, &c. &c. all of which have been examined minutely throughout, as well as the Journal des Sçavans, and several other foreign publications of the same sort.
- Lastly. It is intended to establish a correspondence with some literary person, or bookseller of the greatest eminence, in every principal town of the United States and the British dominions in North America, where any press has been erected, to ascertain what publications have issued therefrom, so as to enable the Editor of this Work to give a complete general History, or Epitome of the literature of that country, from the earliest period of its discovery to the end of the present century.

CONDITIONS OF THE SUBSCRIPTION.

THE Work shall consist of Two Volumes in Quarto, of about five hundred pages each, printed upon a fine Demy paper. The price to Subscribers Two Guineas in boards, to be paid when the whole is completed, which, unless delayed by a personal visit to the Continent of America, for the sake of obtaining more full and effectual information on the subject, will be put to the Press as soon after the beginning of the next century, as the new publications up to that æra can be collected together and properly arranged, provided the number of Subscribers at that time shall be judged sufficient to defray the expenses of the undertaking.

The Dedication of it is intended (*if permission can be obtained for that purpose*) to the Author of the benevolent and truly patriotic Address to the people of the United States of America, upon the resignation of his office as their supreme Magistrate, or, if it may be allowed to express his name to the inhabitants of this country, after so long an interval of peace and good friendship subsisting between the two nations under his auspices, to GENERAL WASHINGTON, accompanied with an elegant Engraving of his person, from the best likeness which can be procured, and a Plan of the City which is called after his name, as a mark of respect to the greatest and most virtuous character that the New World has ever produced; in which opinion it is presumed that every good man and every loyal subject of this country, forgetting all former animosities, will at present concur.

As some apology for obtruding this Work upon the Public in the manner here proposed, and as a greater encouragement for Americans and other persons to subscribe to it, the Compiler pledges himself to give up all the emoluments of it to the use and application of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in foreign Parts, in the success and support of which the inhabitants of America, as well as of this country, and the whole civilized world, are equally interested, deducting only the additional expenses of 100 copies above the number subscribed for, which the Editor means to reserve to himself as presents to his friends, and some indemnification for his own trouble and private expenses in preparing the materials for and superintending this publication.

Such being his design, he trusts it will not be thought unreasonable to add his humble request for every information and assistance from those, in whose power it is to confer it, to render this Work more complete, without unnecessarily increasing the expenses of it.

P. S. As some objection may probably be made to this Work, from the choice of the person to whom it is proposed to be dedicated, upon a supposition that it may serve to display a spirit of party in the prosecution thereof to the prejudice of this country, the Editor thinks proper, in this early stage of it, to disclaim all intentions of the kind, as most foreign to his thoughts and inclination. The only reason, which induces him to solicit the dedication of it to an American in preference to one of his own countrymen, is on account of the locality of the subject, without meaning to form any invidious comparisons with the other actors, or to take any part in the late disputes with America, which, for the mutual interest of both countries, he sincerely wishes were for ever buried in oblivion.

With respect to those disputes however, he cannot help expressing the fullest conviction of his own mind, whatever difference of opinion may in general be entertained of them, that the person here alluded to always acted therein upon the best and purest principles, of which he has given the strongest proof in his subsequent conduct, by setting an example of moderation, religion, reconciliation, good order, and good government, exactly the reverse of modern revolutionists.

Those who intend to encourage this Subscription, are desired to deliver in their names, with their proper descriptions and places of abode, at either of the following Booksellers, that they may be printed accordingly at the beginning of this Work, when it shall be completed: viz. Messrs. DILLY, in the Poultry; RIVINGTONS, St. Paul's Church-yard; ROBINSONS, Paternoster Row; WHITE, Fleet Street; ELMSLY, in the Strand; EGERTON, Charing Cross; PAYNE, at the Maus Gate; NICOL, Pall Mall; WRIGHT, Piccadilly; and FAULDER and ROBSON, Bond Street, London; HANWELL and PARKER (late FLETCHERS), and COOKE, Oxford; and DEIGHTON, and LUNN, Cambridge.

The very great and unexpected success, which the above Proposals have met with in the only place where they have hitherto been generally circulated, demands the warmest acknowledgments of the Person who has thus ventured to lay them before the Public. This he is sensible is chiefly to be attributed to the partiality of friends, or that zeal, which the Members of our Universities are always ready to display in support of the Institution, which they are intended to serve. The latter cause, he trusts, will still continue to operate with the same effect, where he is unknown. Both will stimulate him to use every active exertion in his power in the execution of a Work, which is so generously patronised.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE READER.

In a short time will be republished by the Editor of these Proposals the Address of General WASHINGTON above alluded to, together with his Letter to the present President of the United States of America, upon his late Acceptance of the Chief Command of their Armies against the hostile and unprovoked Aggressions of the French Republic. To which will be added several Anecdotes and Sketches of his Character from different Authors, whether Friends or Enemies to the American Revolution, whose Accounts can be depended upon, to show the general Esteem in which he has been held by all Parties, and to give the greater Weight to his present Determinations.

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